

circuit gave such ample opportunity, implanted in his very nature those germs of noble and lofty views of constitutional and religious freedom, which soon had a wider field for their development.

No man's mental career and experience, however, more clearly demonstrated the truth of the trite adage that "there is no royal road to learning," than did Dr. Ryerson's. It was a long, toilsome, and upward road to him, during the first twenty years of his life. He had little more than reached that age, when he first crossed swords with the then foremost champion of the exclusive claims of one Church to civil and religious rights in Upper Canada.

And here, a slight historical digression will enable us to see that what this youthful writer undertook, in the crusade on which he had so courageously entered, was a much more serious matter than men of to-day are generally aware of.

The grievance complained of originated twelve years before Dr. Ryerson was born. It was embedded in the very Constitution of Upper Canada in 1791. The germ of that whole after evil took root then; and, by the time that that evil was grappled with by Dr. Ryerson and others, between thirty and forty years had passed by, and it had acquired strength and power, so that it took as many more years of anxious toil and labour, as well as successive assaults and active fighting, before the contest was brought to a successful close.

Simcoe, our first Governor, was one of the most enlightened of his contemporaries, in regard to the more practical and material parts of his duty as Governor. Yet he always seemed to be haunted with a vague fear of "sectaries" gaining a foothold in this Province. According to his idea of colonial government, the Church and the State should be united; and, to accomplish this, he bent all his energies, after he came to Upper Canada. Even before he came among us as Governor, he had formulated his own theory as to what civil and religious form his own colonial government should take. As a member of the British Parliament, before he took office under the Constitutional Act of 1791, which he had helped to pass, he had an opportunity of expressing his views, and of maintaining his theory of colonial government in the House of Commons. To him, and to the members who sympathized with his views, were we indebted for what afterwards proved to be an unjust and unfortunate provision in the Constitutional Act of 1791, "for the support of a Protestant clergy," and for the endowment of Church of England parishes in Upper Canada,—a provision which, for more than half a century, was the unceasing cause of bitter strife and heart-burning in this Province.